

BOSTON, MASS.
HERALD TRAVELER

Approved For Release 2004/09/03 : CIA-RDP88-01314R000100440010-6

M AUG 25 1968
S - 302,436



CZECH TENT CITY—In Vienna, where these Czechoslovakians, who were traveling in the West when their country was invaded, gather around a radio for news. (UPI)

Opinions on Crisis: 'Don't Call Us; We'll Call You'

By JAMES SOUTHWOOD

Boston area members of the Communist Party of the USA and known sympathizers said yesterday — four days after Soviet troops invaded Czechoslovakia — more time is needed before they can give an opinion on the Russian action.

"It would be unfortunate," one Communist said, "if this thing is resolved in the next few days before we can make up our minds about it."

THE GENERAL SECRETARY of the party, Gus Hall, issued a statement in New York that the military move was justified. Disagreement with Hall's statement, however, was expressed by members of the party in New York and Southern California.

In Boston there was a general reluctance on the part of many individuals familiar with Russian party policy to make any comment on the Czech crisis, because "all the facts are

Asked for his opinion on the events in Czechoslovakia, Donald Tormey of Beverly, officer of an electrical workers union which was expelled from the AFL-CIO for Communist leanings, said: "Oh _____. Get off that _____. I don't give me that _____. And he hung up the telephone.

Elmer O. Fehlhaber, formerly of the North Shore and now living on Longwood Avenue, Brookline, said when he was asked for his opinion on the Czech crisis: "What is your number? I'll call you back." Fehlhaber apparently is still trying to form an opinion.

In Dorchester, Tom DeFazio interrupted repairing a fence on his Magnolia street property, through which a car had crashed, to talk about the invasion of tanks into Czechoslovakia. "You want to know what I think?" DeFazio said. "Then read the Daily World."

When DeFazio was told that the reporter had read the Daily World and that the Communist newspaper reported there is relative calm in Czechoslovakia, the Dorchester man

said: "Well, I'm like you. All I know is what I read."

HE SAID HE will have to wait until he has more facts on the situation. "If the intervention was to protect a socialist state, that's one thing. If it was because — and there were indications of this — the Sudeten Germans and the CIA were plotting something, then we know what that means."

DeFazio would not say what he meant by "what that means."

Louis P. Gordon of Lynn said, "Of course, you understand that this is by no means an admission of membership, but we were as surprised as anybody else. There had been reports in a Canadian newspaper of an invasion by Sudeten Germans."

"Speaking as an individual," Gordon added, "If the Soviets have made a mistake it will take them less time to rectify it than it has taken us in South Vietnam."

"I have nothing to say to the press," said Bernard Galitz of Lynn. "You can understand why. I have no comment at this time and don't think I'll ever have a comment — for the press."

A Brookline man who was an organizer for the Communist Party in the '50s said, "I'm out of that now. I have not been involved with them for the last 10 years. Personally I deplore it."

Asked why he believed active CP members in the Boston area would not comment on the situation even after many other Communist Party groups in other countries had publicly denounced the move, the Brookline man said: "Because they are obsessed with dogma. They are hard-liners and cannot think for themselves."

FROM HIS APARTMENT on Gerry street, Cambridge, Daniel Boone Schirmer said: "I have no comment." When he was given the names of other men who had been interviewed, Schirmer said: "If that is the kind of person you are listening to, then I have nothing to say."

Edward Teixeira, formerly of New Bedford, who operates the Frederick Douglass Bookstore on Massachusetts avenue, said it will be "difficult to analyze the situation" until he has more information from the Socialist press.

In the bookstore, former taxi-cab driver Sidney Ravid of Blue Hill avenue, Dorchester, said: "You must realize that the Daily World has to depend on UPI and AP for news."

Said Eliot Kenin, New England circulation manager for the Daily World, "We are trying our damndest to get a correspondent into Czechoslovakia."